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SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT

50X1-HUM

COUNTRY Yugoslavia

SUBJECT Rebuilding of Belgrade-Sarajevo Regular
Gauge Railway

PLACE
ACQUIRED

DATE OF INFO

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1. Under the Five Year Plan, it was proposed to convert the narrow gauge rail-
way track on the Belgrade-Kraljevo-Cacak-Titovo-Uzice-Visegrad-Mededa-
Sarajevo stretch from 760 mm. to the regular 1435 mm. gauge which can carry
sixteen tons per axle. The rebuilding of this stretch, simultaneous with
the rebuilding of the Sarajevo-Vrpolje line, was to have been completed in
1947.
2. It was decided to suspend the rebuilding of the Belgrade-Sarajevo route in
1947 because at that time sleepers and other necessary material were in very
short supply because of the construction of the railway line between Dures
and Elbasan in Albania. It was also found impossible, in practice, to re-
build simultaneously both the Sarajevo-Vrpolje and the Belgrade-Sarajevo
routes, as one or the other necessarily had to carry the heavy traffic from
the industrial and mining areas near Zenica. As a further obstacle, there
were also the delays in the delivery of railway lines from Hungary.
3. After the Cominform conflict, such large-scale work could not be undertaken
owing chiefly to the lack of material. Deliveries of steel from Czechoslo-
vakian and railway sleepers and other material from Hungary ceased entirely.
The railway sleeper industry, which is practically limited to Zenica, could
not even meet the demand for sleepers necessary to complete the double track
on the Belgrade-Novska line.
4. In the meantime, work was begun on the completion of a second detour in order
to attain better through communications between Belgrade, Sarajevo and the
sea. It is planned to complete the installation of a double track on part of
the route between Belgrade-Vinkovic, that is, between Batjnica-Boljevic and
the branch to Bosut-Bjelina, and the Sabac-Koviljaca-Zvornik branch of the
Belgrade-Vinkovic line. It is intended to build a branch line from Zvornik
as far as Tuzla from where connections exist on the normal gauge line via
Doboj to Sarajevo. The Belgrade-Sarajevo stretch will thus be shortened by
120 kilometers. From Zvornik, also, it is planned to run the second branch
of the line through the Drina Valley as far as Bajina Basta. From there it
will reportedly continue as far as Titovo Uzice and join the projected normal
gauge Belgrade-Sarajevo route.

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5. Nothing has been built along these two branches so far. The stretch to Zvornik is not completed. Work has barely started on the conversion of the Sarajevo-Belgrade stretch to normal gauge, and it is unlikely that it will be completed this year.
6. In 1948 it was planned to change to normal gauge the Sarajevo-Konjic-Mostar-Gabala stretch with a branch to the port of Ploce and Dubrovnik-Kotor. Lack of resources, caused by the Cominform boycott, made this plan impossible. The "Voluntary Youth Brigade" was to do the work but was put to building the Belgrade-Zagreb road in 1948.
7. Work was begun in 1949 on the completion of the railway line to Ploce. It is being carried out with paid labor under the direction of "Number 1 Federal Railway Building Concern" with headquarters in Sarajevo. The new track follows the old one, except for a small detour near Ostrazac to the Prekaj station where a long tunnel is being constructed near the Jablanica power station.
8. The extra water brought to the artificial lake for the Jablanica power station was obtained by raising the level of the Neretva River by 80 cm., as a result, however, the old narrow gauge railway line was flooded. Work on the tunnel, which is to be about ten kilometers long, has already begun but has not progressed very far. It is of vital importance that the stretch be completed at least as far as Jablanica, otherwise the equipment for the power station cannot be installed, because generators and other large machines cannot be transported on the narrow gauge tracks. This work is being carried out with paid labor so as to achieve speedier results. Presently, it is intended to continue this stretch only as far as Ploce. The stretch to Dubrovnik and Kotor remains narrow gauge and will probably not be changed to normal gauge in the near future. The railway from Sarajevo to Ploce is 168 kilometers long.

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